

# Connecticut Weekly AGRICULTURAL REPORT

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor  
Steven K. Reviczky, Commissioner  
Steve Jensen, Editor



Connecticut Department of Agriculture  
March 3, 2015



Some of the nearly 1,000 attendees at last week's 2015 Harvest New England Ag Marketing Conference and Trade Show.

## GROWING MARKETING SKILLS, BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS AT HARVEST NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE

*By Steve Jensen, Office of Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky*

In the eyes of many shoppers, one cucumber or apple or tomato may look pretty much like another.

So an increasingly important challenge for growers in today's marketplace is to find ways to make their products stand out at the farmers' market or on the store shelf.

That was the overarching message that keynote speaker Jonathan Raduns had last week for attendees of the 2015 Harvest New England Ag Marketing Conference and Trade Show: "Direct Marketing to Diversified Wholesale: Finding What Works For You."

The two-day annual conference – sponsored by the state agricultural departments in each of the six New England states – attracted nearly 1,000 farmers and other agricultural stakeholders to the Sturbridge (MA.) Host Hotel.

In a breakout session called "Power Branding," Raduns focused on what he called "points of difference" that make a product appealingly unique.

"Retailers are looking to be different in the marketplace and that can mean opportunities for growers," said Raduns, who grew up on a farm in western New York and now works for FreshXperts and runs his Merchandise Food retail and strategy consulting firm in New Jersey. "If you're not giving them something different, you're interchangeable."

That can mean simple but effective ideas like attractive packaging that communicates a distinct look and message.

One example Raduns showed was "Love Beets" – a line of beet-based organic products, including some ready-to-eat – sold in brightly colored packages bearing the slogan "Stay True to Your Roots."

Another was "Gator Eggs," a six-pack of avocados sold in a container similar to an egg carton with an alligator-themed logo and marketed as a ready-to-eat snack.

"They're taking the market by storm," Raduns said of the products. "Retailers and customers are looking for a product that has a story and they want to know where it came from and they want it to be convenient. Your job as a good grower-shipper is to help tell that story."

Some of his other tips for growers included:

- Creating a vibrant online presence through websites and social media, both to market products and to gain insight into their customer's demographics and shopping preferences.
- Building industry exposure and relationships at trade shows and agricultural conferences.
- Proactively contacting retailers, restaurants and other potential customers with ideas or product proposals. He calls the practice "prospecting."

"If you're looking for a new customer because you lost one it's already too late," Raduns said.

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**PA LIVESTOCK SUMMARY**

Avg. Dressing

SLAUGHTER COWS:	LOW	HIGH
breakers 75-80% lean	105.00	109.50
boners 80-85% lean	103.75	108.25
lean 85-90% lean	98.25	104.00
CALVES graded bull		
No 1 95-120lbs	356.00	392.50
No 1 80-90lbs	316.50	365.00
No 2 95-120lbs	317.50	365.75
No 2 80-90lbs	333.25	360.00
No 3 80-120lbs	243.25	337.25
SLAUGHTER STEERS		
HiCh/Prm2-3	162.00	164.50
Ch1-3	157.50	161.00
Sel1-2	153.50	157.00
SLAUGHTER HOLSTEINS		
HiCh/Prm2-3	147.50	152.25
Ch2-3	137.50	143.00
Sel1-2	130.50	135.00
SLAUGHTER HEIFERS		
HiCh/Prm2-3	161.00	163.25
Ch1-3	155.25	158.50
Sel1-2	153.25	154.50
VEALERS Utility 60-120lb	67.00	158.00
SLAUGHTER LAMBS: Non-Traditional		
Markets: ch/pr 2-3		
40-70 lbs	315.00	360.00
80-110 lbs	237.00	262.00
100-130 lbs	220.00	235.00
130-150 lbs	207.00	247.00
SLAUGHTER EWES: 2-3		
120-160 lbs Good	115.00	150.00
160-200 lbs Good	110.00	135.00
Bucks		
160-200 lbs	122.00	142.00
200-300 lbs	95.00	127.00
SLAUGHTER GOATS: Sel.1, by head, est.		
40-50 lbs	155.00	175.00
50-60 lbs	190.00	240.00
70-80 lbs	265.00	295.00
80-90 lbs	200.00	225.00
Nannies/Does: 90-140 lbs	200.00	235.00
Bucks/Billies: 130-140 lbs	217.00	235.00
150-160 lbs	268.00	272.00

**NEW HOLLAND, PA. HOG AUCTION**

Sold by actual weights; prices quoted by hundred wt.

48-52	250-300 lbs	40.00	50.00
52-56	250-300 lbs	55.00	61.00
Sows, US1-3	300-500 lbs	20.00	32.00
Boars	200-400 lbs	30.00	48.00
	400-700 lbs	9.00	11.00

**WHOLESALE FRUITS & VEGETABLES****NEW ENGLAND GROWN****Boston Terminal and Wholesale Grower Prices**

	LOW	HIGH
LFALFA SPROUTS, 5LB	14.00	14.00
APPLE, MCINTOSH, 80, USFCY	18.00	18.00
CIDER, APPLE 4-1 GAL	21.00	21.00
PARSNIPS, 25LB	24.00	30.00
TOMATOES, 25LB, GRHSE, VR	24.00	25.00
TOMS, CHERRY, GHS, 8/10 OZ	22.00	23.00

**SHIPPED IN**

APPLE, EMPIRE, NY, 88, XFCY	26.00	26.00
APPLE, HNYCRISP, 80, WAXFCY	78.00	78.00
APPLE, PINKLADY, 80, WAXFCY	38.00	38.00
BATATAS, FL, 50 LB SACK	29.00	33.00
BEANS, GREEN, FL, BU, MCHPK	17.00	18.00
BEETS, RED, TX, CTN, 12 BUNCH	16.00	18.00
CABBAGE, FL, 50 LB	14.00	14.00
CARROTS, CA, 16/3LB	20.00	22.00
COLLARDS, TX, 24/CTN	20.00	20.00
DANDELION, GA, 1-3/5BU, 12CT	18.00	20.00
EGGPLANT, FL, 1-1/9BU	22.00	23.00
GRPFruit, WHT, FL, 4/5BU, 27	18.00	22.00
KALE, CA, 24 BUNCH/CRATE	20.00	20.00
PEAR, D'ANJOU, WA, US#1, 120	28.00	32.00
PEPPERS, GRN, FL, LG, 1-1/9BU	16.00	16.00
POTATO, RUSSET, CO, 50LB, #1	20.00	21.00
SPINACH, BABY, CA, 4LB	9.50	10.00
STRAWBERRIES, 8-1LB, FL	10.00	12.00
SWEET POTATOES, LA, 40LB	28.00	30.00

**USDA WEEKLY/WHOLESALE PRICES****ORGANIC YOUNG CHICKEN**

Per lb.

WHOLE FRYER	1.70	3.22
BNIN/BREAST	3.60	6.16
B/S BREAST	5.69	10.58
THIGHS	1.95	3.92

**HAY****LANCASTER, PA/PRICE PER TON**

	PREMIUM	GOOD
ALFALFA	240.00-355.00	220.00-240.00
MIXED HAY	250.00-405.00	210.00-230.00
TIMOTHY	230.00-375.00	185.00-210.00
STRAW	165.00-230.00	

**USDA/WEEKLY WHOLESALE  
ORGANIC BROWN EGGS**

EX LARGE		
DOZ	2.61	3.60
½ DOZ	1.80	1.95
LARGE		
DOZ	2.30	3.50
½ DOZ	1.71	1.90

**MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION**

Middlefield, CT., March 2, 2015

Bob Calves:	LOW	HIGH
45-60 lbs.	45.00	55.00
61-75 lbs.	65.00	75.00
76-90 lbs.	210.00	220.00
91-105 lbs.	240.00	250.00
106 lbs. & up	265.00	275.00
Farm Calves	290.00	300.00
Starter Calves	40.00	50.00
Veal Calves	72.50	180.00
Open Heifers	135.00	165.00
Beef Heifers	142.50	148.00
Feeder Steers	160.00	170.00
Beef Steers	137.50	142.50
Stock Bulls	150.00	175.00
Beef Bulls	140.00	145.00
Replacement Cows	n/a	n/a
Replacement Heifers	n/a	n/a
Boars	n/a	n/a
Sows	n/a	n/a
Butcher Hogs	n/a	n/a
Feeder Pigs	n/a	n/a
Sheep	105.00	120.00
Lambs	170.00	200.00
Goats each	150.00	200.00
Kid Goats	2 at 35.00 each	
Canners	up to	109.50
Cutters	110.00	114.00
Utility Grade Cows	115.00	122.00
Rabbits each	7.00	30.00
Chickens each	3.00	14.00
Ducks each	2.00	5.00

**NORTHEAST EGG PRICES USDA**Per doz. Grade A and Grade A white  
in cartons to retailers (volume buyers)

XTRA LARGE	1.35	1.52
LARGE	1.29	1.43
MEDIUM	1.17	1.30

**NEW ENGLAND SHELL EGGS**Per doz. Grade A brown in  
carton delivered store door. (Range)

XTRA LARGE	2.07	2.17
LARGE	2.03	2.13
MEDIUM	1.52	1.62

**PA FEEDER PIG SUMMARY**

US # 1-2 20-30lb	130.00	170.00
30-40 lb	105.00	110.00
40-50 lb	105.00	150.00



**FOR SALE**

11-R. Blumenthal & Donahue is now Connecticut's first independent NATIONWIDE Agri-Business Insurance Agency. Christmas tree growers, beekeepers, sheep breeders, organic farmers and all others, call us for all your insurance needs. 800-554-8049 or [www.bludon.com](http://www.bludon.com).

2-R. Farm, homeowner and commercial insurance—we do it all. Call Blumenthal & Donahue 800-554-8049 or [www.bludon.com](http://www.bludon.com).

3-R. Gallagher electric fencing for farms, horses, deer control, gardens, & beehives. Sonpal's Power Fence 860-491-2290.

4-R. Packaging for egg sales. New egg cartons, flats, egg cases, 30 doz and 15 doz. Polinsky Farm 860-376-2227.

5-R. Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Program, endorsed by the CT Farm Bureau, save up to 23% on your farm insurance and get better protection. References available from satisfied farmers. Call Marci today at 203-444-6553.

8-R. CT non-GMO grain and corn. Hay and straw. Pleasant View Farms. Louis. 860-803-0675.

19-R. 1988 International Model 1954, 22 foot body, excellent condition. New tires. \$12,000.00. Call Al 203-223-4853.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

6-R. Farm/Land specializing in land, farms, and all types of Real Estate. Established Broker with a lifetime of agricultural experience and 40 years of finance. Representing both Buyers and Sellers. Call Clint Charter of Wallace-Tustin Realty (860) 644-5667.

17-R. Free professional advising sessions for farmers - CT Farm Risk Management and Crop Insurance Program. One-on-One confidential sessions with an agri-business professional to discuss farm related issues. Dates available March, April.

[www.ctfarmrisk.uconn.edu](http://www.ctfarmrisk.uconn.edu)

**SPECIALTY CROP CONCEPT PROPOSALS SOUGHT**

The Department of Agriculture is requesting concept proposal for projects that solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

Specialty crops are defined by the USDA as fruits and vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, maple syrup, honey, horticulture, and nursery crops.

Projects must impact and produce measurable outcomes for the specialty crop industry and/or the public. Submitted projects cannot begin until after January 1, 2015 and must be completed by September 28, 2018. The maximum award is \$75,000.

For more information and complete application guidelines, visit the agency's website, [www.ctgrown.gov/grants](http://www.ctgrown.gov/grants), or contact Jaime Smith at 860-713-2559 or [jaime.smith@ct.gov](mailto:jaime.smith@ct.gov).

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- Maintaining a database of customer information and sales trends that can help tailor product offerings.
- Memorizing a brief, compelling sales pitch of what the grower can offer a customer in terms of actual product and unique, value-added elements. That can also be used to gain exposure in local media.

"You need to be able to effectively communicate in just a few sentences what it is you do," said Raduns.

That kind of "branding" is exactly what the nearly 100 agricultural service providers, specialty food companies, wholesalers, distributors and state and federal agencies were trying to do at the conference's trade show.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture's booth offered everything from advice to growers looking to diversify or expand with the help of a state grant to hats and shirts bearing the Connecticut Grown logo.

"This conference is one of the best ways for growers to get face-to-face information that can help them thrive in an increasingly competitive market," said Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky, who gave welcoming remarks and participated in a number of other meetings.

The conference's other main speaker, Nancy Clark of Drive Brand Studios in New Hampshire, focused on marketing to "millennials," the 80 million people born in the U.S. between 1980 and 1995. She said millennials will account for half of the work force by 2020, and 75% of the global workforce by 2030.

The generation is entering its prime earning and spending years, Clark stressed, so it is vital that growers and other agricultural businesses understand what makes them tick - and buy. They are perhaps the most educated generation in history, she said, are rooted in authenticity and genuineness, and are intensely passionate about their world and its future.

Clark's "The Power of Millennial Thinking" speech explained the influence they are having on other generations, and encouraged growers to have a positive impact on their business by thinking like millennials themselves.

Among the other topics covered in the conference's breakout sessions and seminars were:

- Selling to Grocery Stores: The Pros and Cons
- SNAP/EBT Outreach Strategies
- Why Ag Commissions are Important to Your Town
- Farmers' Markets in Today's Local Food Landscape
- Farm to Institution Nuts and Bolts
- Ag Terminology: Commonly Confused Terms
- Visual Merchandising 101
- Establishing Effective Institutional Contracts
- Do's and Don'ts of Farming in the Wetland Resource Area
- Could Your Farm Benefit from a Marketing Co-op?
- Working With Food Hubs and Processing Centers
- Practices for a Successful Agritourism Effort
- Unpacking the Distribution Dilemma
- How Cooperatives Add Value to Farm Businesses

Other contributors and sponsors of the event were: CT FarmLink; Farm Fresh RI; Farm Credit East, Northeast Ag Enhancement; Farm-to-Institution New England; Little Rhody Farm and Foods; MA Association of Agricultural Commissions; MarketLink; Murtha, Cullina, LLP & Francis DiLuna.

**More information on the conference is available at:**

[www.harvestnewengland.org](http://www.harvestnewengland.org)



**FARM SAFE GRANT DEADLINE THIS FRIDAY**

The Department of Agriculture has created a new State Assistance for Enhancements (SAFE) Grant is to provide matching funds to Connecticut farmers and farmer cooperatives.

The grants are designed to improve and diversify production, harvesting, processing, and manufacturing of agricultural farm products in accordance with the anticipated Food Safety Moderation Act (FSMA), and to expand venues and other markets in which a majority of products sold are grown in the state.

The purpose is to provide financial support to farmers to enhance their agricultural operations in accordance with anticipated FSMA regulations to increase profits and to assist farmers seeking to diversify, transition into new production areas, and/or expand existing production in accordance with anticipated FSMA regulations;

Farmers and farmer cooperatives are eligible to apply. Projects must focus on food safety enhancements, and priority projects are included in the guidelines. These are competitive grants are based primarily on the submitted business plan.

Award maximum is \$25,000 and there a 50-percent cash match requirement. Questions and applications should be directed to Jaime Smith at [jaime.smith@ct.gov](mailto:jaime.smith@ct.gov) or 860-713-2559. Deadline is 4 p.m. on Friday March 6, 2015. Applications are accepted via email only.

**FREE AGRICULTURAL LABOR LAW SEMINAR**

Farm businesses with questions about hiring employees are welcome to attend a free seminar on the basics of agriculture labor laws March 25 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Lebanon Fire Safety Complex, 25 Goshen Hill Road.

The presentation by labor specialist Attorney Jessica Z. Wragg is co-sponsored by the municipal agricultural commissions of Bozrah, Colchester, Franklin, Lebanon, Sprague and East Lyme.

Wragg will address issues including hiring seasonal and youth labor, as well as how to provide apprenticeship or volunteer opportunities.

The program is a cooperative effort of the CT Dept. of Agriculture, the USDA Risk Management Agency, the CT Farm Bureau Association and UConn Extension. For more information call 860-768-1105.



**Above: Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky speaks with Tom Pinchbeck and Lori Gregan of Roses For Autism farm in Guilford, which set up a booth at last week's Harvest New England Ag Marketing Conference and Trade Show. Below, Jonathan Raduns gave his "Power Branding" presentation during one of more than 25 breakout sessions.**



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